

ORIGIN ACTION

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ARMY CIA NAVY

OSD USIA NSA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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A-132

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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO

Department of State  
BUREAU OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRSREVIEWED BY Car DATE 26 OCT 1970  
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BUREAU OF  
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
JUN 11 1970Cate  
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FROM

Amembassy GUATEMALA

DATE: June 5, 1970

SUBJECT

INTERNAL SECURITY: Monthly Report of Incidents, May 1970

REF

**SUMMARY:** The level of politically related violence in May grew over that of April due in part to terrorist and counterterrorist acts in the first weeks of the month. Activity slackened as the month wore on and the Ojo por Ojo joined the FAR (Rebel Armed Forces) and PGT/FAR (Guatemalan Workers Party/Revolutionary Armed Forces) in a state of relative inaction. A significant amount of violence was reported in Escuintla, and Jalapa saw a number of violent crimes that might have some political relationship. Two notable figures in Guatemala's internal security history, Yon Sosa and "El Gallo Giro" met violent deaths.

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1. Newspaper accounts credited the Ojo por Ojo counterterrorist movement with five murders in the first week of May (see A-119) and with two more on the 16th and 17th. The Embassy has no confirmation that these were indeed Ojo assassinations. Numerous individuals reportedly have received Ojo death threats. In the city of Quezaltenango, according to one press account, more than fifty people, including teachers, newspapermen, doctors and radio reporters have received notes threatening them with death if they do not leave the country. Another press story indicated that sixty-eight people are on Ojo's list in the parcelmientos of Escuintla (see below). The recent DCG congressional candidate in Quezaltenango has reportedly left the country in fear for his life. An Ojo note addressed to a radio reporter in Zacapa similarly promised death and stated that the organization had killed a schoolteacher in the same Department a few weeks earlier. The assassinated mayor of San Bernadino, Retalhuleu also reportedly received Ojo threats before he was shot to death in a gas station on May 25. Despite the many threats, there were no press reports of Ojo murders after mid-May.

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2. The left has slipped into relative inaction as well. The FAR remains in the same dormant state that has characterized it since the von Spreta murder on April 5. This is not to say that there has been no leftist violence in the past month. In the first weeks of May, a number of crimes that can most probably be attributed to one or the other of the extreme leftist groups were committed. On May 3, Marco Tulio RENDON Escobar, a 30-year sub-lieutenant in the Army reserves was shot to death in a photo studio where he was working. He is reported to have been an active Arana campaigner. On May 11, the brother-in-law of ex-chief of the Judicial Police, Jose Maria MOREIRA, who himself had been the target of a recent assassination attempt was murdered shortly after leaving his brother-in-law's house. On May 1 Francisco Javier PINEDA was shot down on a Guatemala City street. (The names of Pineda and Rendon appeared on an anonymous note received by the Embassy accusing them as members of the Ojo group. The note, dated April, was not received until May 7 and conceivably could have been written after the two were murdered. Salvador ORELLANA Morales and Capt. Justo Rodriguez Diaz, who was killed on April 29, also were accused.)

3. The "parcelmientos" of the Tiquisate area of Escuintla are notoriously lawless. The parcelmientos are government holdings, some of them expropriated from the United Fruit Company, which have been given out to small private landowners. Some of the land has been parcelled out more than once, however, by various regimes and ownership disputes are endemic. This is little effective law enforcement and even the Army is hesitant to send patrols in on a regular basis. The situation approaches that of Dodge City without Marshal Dillon and Chester. During the month of May, approximately fifteen people were murdered in the region. Their deaths might be of greater significance than a simple index of the lawless nature of the area. It is possible that some of the murders may have been politically inspired. 31  
that "Los Lobos" are back in operation in the area. Common thugs, this band of thieves has also been known to hire itself out to the FAR for specific dirty jobs. Another possible internal security ramification revolves around the fact that the widow of the last victim claims that her husband had received a death threat prior to his murder which stated that "we shall apply the law of Ojo por Ojo to you and 68 more 'parceleros' who are on our list".

4. On the night of May 22, the home of Isidro Hernandez Boyat in San Manuel Chapparón, Jalapa was attacked by a group of men reportedly dressed in olive green uniforms. Using grenades and automatic weapons they killed Hernandez and eight members of his family, including women and children. The Army Public Relations Office issued a bulletin placing the culpability for the attack on three men, one of whom is the ex-PR congressional candidate for the Department. He has denied the charge and has claimed that the massacred family were close friends and political supporters. One newspaper account indicated that the murdered man had taken part in a number of assassinations, the last of which was shortly before his death and left dead a young MLN stalwart in the area. During the month there was one other report of uniform-clad men attacking a farmhouse in Jalapa and killing the husband and wife asleep inside.

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5. Two well-known figures from Guatemala's guerrilla past met their deaths in the month of May. Salvador ORELLANA Morales, "El Gallo Giro", died as a result of injuries sustained in an auto crash in the early morning of May 10. A former guerrilla who turned informer and became personal bodyguard to Colonel Arana, he was high on the list of targets of the extreme left. Many rumors to the contrary, there appears to be little evidence to indicate that his death was not caused by drunken driving. YON Sosa, the granddaddy of the Guatemalan guerrilla movement, was killed in a firefight by elements of the Mexican Army in the border area of Chiapas state, on or about May 16. Sosa had not been an active force in the Guatemalan guerrilla movement for some time and his activities and death on the border were peripheral to the current danger of urban terrorism.

6. In other footnotes to past violence, three bodies were found in Los Amates, Izabal, in a state of advanced decomposition. They were presumed to be three military commissioners kidnapped from a bar in the same Department on the night of March 4. Mrs. Estela Marina ESTRADA Galvan who was kidnapped on May 28 and found the next day near Lake Amatitlan with a bullet in her head but still alive, has now made her way to the Mexican Embassy where she has been granted asylum. The poet Aberlado Antonio RODAS Barrios, his wife and two children also were granted asylum and have left the country under safe conduct passes for Mexico..

He and his wife had been detained by the police during the last State of Siege.

7. Other acts of politically related violence during the month of May included the following:

a. The murder of a PR mayor in Chiquimula on the 3rd and of a mayor-elect in Retalhuleu on the 25th, and the machinegunning of the empty home of the PR mayor-elect in Chiquimula also on the 25th.

b. The ambush of an army squad searching for clues in the Retalhuleu murder. A copy of "Verdad", the PGT publication, was reportedly found at the sight of the ambush.

c. A grenade was thrown at the Guatemala City home of Lupe PORRAS, a leftist political leader during the Arevalo period and current PR member on May 20.

d. Juan CARRETO, ex-judicial chief, was killed from ambush in Nuevo Progreso, San Marcos.

e. A national policeman was murdered in downtown Guatemala City on May 22.

f. The car of the chief of the investigative section of the Judicial Police was machinegunned on the evening of May 25. He was not in the car at the time but his wife and chauffeur were injured. His daughter escaped unharmed.

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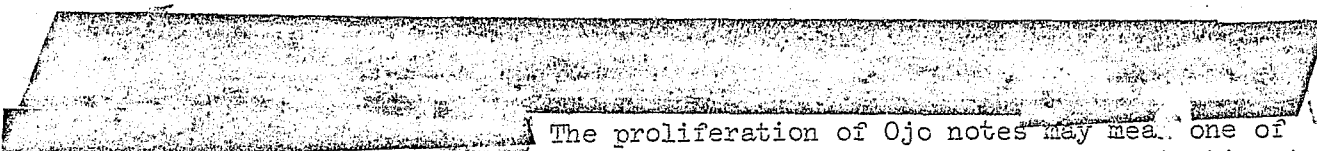
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g. A small bomb was thrown at the Israeli residence on the night of May 11. Ambassador and Mrs. Tov were out of the country at the time and the building was undamaged.

COMMENT: The current low postures of the extremist groups at both ends of the terrorist spectrum cannot be expected to continue indefinitely. If for no other reason than to maintain the adherence of some of its members, the FAR will most probably attempt another of its spectacular acts of urban terrorism. Similarly, the PGT must contend with some of its own more zealous and hardline members and may have difficulty keeping them in place. The conventional wisdom holds that the forthcoming changeover in governments will provide the extreme left with a good opportunity to flex its muscles and in doing so attempt to embarrass President-elect Carlos ARANA Osorio and his new administration.

 The proliferation of Ojo notes may mean one of two things. Either, in its current state of quietude, the organization is confining itself to threats and planning for future operations, or that other individuals or groups have appropriated the Ojo name for personal and political motives. The truth may be a mixture of both.

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